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header:

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000098

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN (GORKOWSKI)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/09/2020

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [PHUM](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: HEAD OF SECRETARIAT ASSERTS SADYRKULOV DEATH AN
ACCIDENT

REF: A. BISHKEK 96
[1](#)B. BISHKEK 71
C 09 BISHKEK 119

BISHKEK 00000098 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Ambassador Tatiana C. Gfoeller, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (S) Summary: During a friendly lunch at the
Ambassador's residence, Oksana Malevanaya, the Head of the
Presidential Secretariat, broached the topic of Medet

Sadyrkulov's death. She said that he was her husband, soul mate and the father of her youngest child, and that she could not have continued working for the Kyrgyz government had she believed it had killed him. With apparently deep emotion, she described the reasoning that led her to believe Sadyrkulov's death was indeed an accident. She observed that the Kyrgyz Security Services are simply "too stupid" to have been capable of assassinating him. She also claimed that leading up to and following his resignation, Sadyrkulov had been talking with the opposition through Valentin Bogatyrov and Sergei Slepchenko, but that he had never wavered in his loyalty to President Bakiyev. End Summary.

12. (C) The Ambassador hosted Oksana Malevanaya, the Head of the Presidential Secretariat, for a lunch at her residence on February 3. The discussion was friendly, and covered several topics, including pressing for a visit by Secretary Clinton, the future of the Drug Control Agency, and the abolishment of the Ministry of Defense. The tenor of the discussion changed, however, when Malevanaya introduced the topic of Medet Sadyrkulov, and described her perspective on his political activities and the nature of his death. This is the second part of a two-part cable (ref A).

A Tragic Accident?

13. (S) After about an hour of discussion, the tenor of the meeting changed dramatically when Malevanaya introduced the subject of the death of Medet Sadyrkulov. Visibly trembling, and with her eyes filling with tears, she said that Sadyrkulov had been her husband, her "soul mate," and the father of her youngest child. She said that she is tormented by people who ask how she can continue to work for the government that killed him. The answer to that, she said passionately, was that the Bakiyev Government did not kill him. She said that she is very familiar with the capabilities of the Kyrgyz Security Service (SNB), and they are simply "too stupid" to be able to carry out a complex assassination. Also, she said, on the day Sadyrkulov died, he had telephoned her and told her that he himself was uncertain about when he would be traveling back from Almaty. Therefore, she reasoned, it would have been impossible to ambush him.

14. (S) Continuing, she said that she has seen "18 different autopsy reports," none of which indicate that the people in the car were shot before they died. Sadyrkulov's body was almost completely incinerated, but it was clear from reports that Sergei Slepchenko had been alive when he burned. She also said that the location of the car was not as suspicious as it seemed: Twelve Chimneys Gorge was one of Sadyrkulov's favorite spots, and he often went there to walk around. In short, Malevanaya believed the official story that their deaths were an accident was true: The car was hit from behind, and a fire quickly ignited the interior upholstery. Fumes from the upholstery incapacitated the men, and they subsequently asphyxiated or burned to death.

15. (S) Malevanaya also said that, contrary to many accounts (ref B), there was never any violent break between herself and Sadyrkulov, although they had disagreed sharply about his decision to leave the government. She said that while she was pregnant with his child (her second), she stepped back from politics. During that time, while she was not paying

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attention, Sadyrkulov fell under the influence of Valentin Bogatyrov and Slepchenko, who, to advance their own agendas, pulled Sadyrkulov into contacts with the political opposition. Malevanaya said that although Sadyrkulov was speaking to the opposition, he was still fundamentally loyal to President Bakiyev. After Malevanaya had her son, she reentered political life, and began trying to peel Sadyrkulov away from Bogatyrov and Slepchenko, but she was unsuccessful.

¶6. (S) Malevanaya expressed a great deal of venom towards Bogatyrov and Slepchenko, but in spite of repeated questions by the Ambassador, the reason for the hostility remained unclear. Malevanaya said, without explaining the source of her knowledge, that Bogatyrov and Slepchenko had engineered Janysh Bakiyev's appointment as the head of the Presidential Security Service as a stratagem to make Sadyrkulov feel more vulnerable, and therefore more amenable to covert talks with the opposition.

¶7. (S) When the Ambassador asked whose interests these conspiracies would advance, Malevanaya gave two, apparently conflicting, answers. First, she said Bogatyrov is an agent of the Russian FSB, implying that weakening Sadyrkulov had been in the interest of the Russian Government. Second, she implied that Bogatyrov, Slepchenko, or both, had ties to a very wealthy Kazakh businessman, whom she did not name. Sadyrkulov, she claimed, was the only man in the Kyrgyz government smart enough to figure out this man's intentions. Despite appeals from the Kazakh to ethnic solidarity (Sadyrkulov was an ethnic Kazakh), Sadyrkulov had earlier clashed with this businessman, and prevented him from "taking over the Kyrgyz economy." So, Malevanaya reasoned that this businessman would have had an interest in removing Sadyrkulov from power, or at least distracting him with Janysh while he tried again to take over the Kyrgyz economy..

Comment

¶8. (S) Malevanaya is evidently still very distraught at the death of Sadyrkulov, and extremely angry at Bogatyrov and Slepchenko for their "involvement" with Sadyrkulov. Despite Malevanaya's comments, Sadyrkulov may have been deeply involved in plotting Bakiyev's overthrow. In February 2009, shortly before his death, Sadyrkulov met with the Ambassador (ref C) and described his plans to organize opposition to Bakiyev and install former Vice Prime Minister Elmira Ibrahimova as Bakiyev's successor. It is unclear whether Malevanaya was unaware of this activity or was being less than candid. However, Malevanaya's account of Sadyrkulov's relationship with Slepchenko and Bogatyrov is roughly consistent with an open letter recently published by Syrgak Abdyldayev, a journalist who was brutally assaulted in March 2009. Abdyldayev claimed that he was working with Slepchenko, and through him, Sadyrkulov, in developing a new opposition website.

GFOELLER

=====CABLE ENDS=====